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C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 001196

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB AND EUR/RPM  
NSC FOR M. RUPERT

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: LITHUANIAN PARLIAMENT PASSES REVISED INTERNATIONAL  
OPS BILL

REF: A. VILNIUS 991

[1](#)B. VILNIUS 931

Classified By: POL/ECON OFFICER TREVOR BOYD  
FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (U) Summary. The Lithuanian parliament September 29 approved a bill raising the ceiling on the number of troops deployable in international operations and extending authorization of current missions through December 31, 2005. The bill mandates that Lithuania deploy an all-volunteer force and allows transfer of troops within a region. It also authorizes transfer of Lithuanian troops to the command of the United Nations, NATO, or an EU member state without a separate parliamentary mandate. Passage of this bill advances an important issue on our bilateral agenda and helps ensure Lithuania's continued participation in international operations. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) The Lithuanian parliament (Seimas) in extraordinary session September 29 approved a resolution to extend and increase Lithuania's participation in international operations in the Persian Gulf, Central and South Asia, and the Balkans, voting thirty (30) in favor, four (4) opposed, with four (4) abstentions. The bill, which President Valdas Adamkus sponsored and Defense Minister Linas Linkevicius drafted, sets specific deployment ceilings for the three regions where the Lithuanian military engages in fourteen international missions, authorizing up to 140 military personnel in the Balkans, 120 in the Persian Gulf, and 70 to Central and South. It also provides MOD operational flexibility to withdraw, deploy, or transfer personnel within regions as events dictate, without additional parliamentary approval.

[1](#)3. (U) The Seimas rejected an eleventh-hour bid by a Social Democrat MP Algirdas Sysas to reduce Lithuania's presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, but approved a motion codifying the existing practice of deploying an all-volunteer force to Lithuania's international missions. The bill also allows Lithuania to transfer control of its national forces to an UN, NATO or EU-led command without additional parliamentary approval.

[1](#)6. (C) Comment. The MOD pushed this legislative amendment to a vote before the October 10 elections in order to avoid having to educate new Seimas members on the issue and the legislative history, which could have substantially delayed approval. In so doing, they advanced an issue high on our bilateral agenda and reinforced Lithuania's assurances of continued partnership in critical international operations. Mull